PUDUKKOTTAI STATE
NATIONAL WAR FRONT BUREAU

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LECTURE CXLIII.

THE TUNISIAN OPERATIONS.

(Gen. Eisenhower's Review).

Reviewing the operations in N. Africa as a whole Gen. Eisenhower said that success had been achieved by the co-ordination of the Commands, by daring assaults, and, above all, by the acquisition of air bases right up in the forward lines.

Discussing the difficulties which still lay ahead, Gen. Eisenhower mentioned the fighting qualities of the German soldiers, and the vast minefields which were being laid by them.

The American Second Corps, in their drive from Gafsa, Gen. Eisenhower said, captured 4,680 prisoners, 683 vehicles, 150 guns, and knocked out 69 tanks. They had to deal with 45,000 mines.

The American casualties in this operation were 5,372 killed, wounded and missing.

When the offensive was planned to advance west from Egypt, and the decision having been taken by the British and U. S. Governments to land in N. W. Africa and advance east, it was obvious that the Mediterranean Channel and Tunisia were going to assume the greatest importance. The Forces landing in N. Africa had no exact knowledge of the military problem which they were up against.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES.

The first mission, therefore, was to secure the most useful bases—Casablanca, Oran and Algiers. They were the primary objectives, and from there attacks were launched east-ward. The initial equipment was not of a type for an advance over great distances and against very powerful Forces. On the other hand, we wanted the battle line as far east as possible. The 1st Army was, therefore, rushed to Tunisia.

The British Forces on that occasion, in my opinion, gave an example of what boldness would do, and proved that calculated risk may achieve in results.

As a product of that boldness and fortitude, regardless of some technical reverses, we were enabled to hold the enemy along the eastern shores of Tunisia, and secure for ourselves the vital need, which was forward air bases.

It was most desirable that the Egyptian campaign should not deteriorate into an experience to which we had run before—pushing the Germans west and then coming to the limit of the long line of communications, somewhere round or east of Tripoli. We knew we could keep that from happening if we got airfields, and kept them supplied. Airfields also allowed us cover for naval units.

With better weather, the air results became astounding. On Apr. 10, 63 enemy aircraft were shot down on the same day on which one Italian cruiser was sunk and another put out of action. We lost 3 aircraft. In January it was determined that the time had come to make a consolidation of the command.

After recalling the changes which were made, Gen. Eisenhower declared: From that moment onward you had a perfect example of complete co-ordination in battle.

GEN. ALEXANDER'S ROLE.

Gen. Alexander, though not in a position to make heavy attacks, assured the 8th Army's success. He put the 2nd U. S. Corps on the Gafsa-Fondouk Front, and threatened to draw off the forces facing Gen. Montgomery. The result was that what was remaining of the 10th and 21st Panzers were suddenly faced by U. S. Troops. It is estimated that some 37,000 enemy combat Forces were drawn to that region.

The enemy was given no rest on the flank. Gen. Montgomery prepared to advance more quickly towards the German foe, but when he and his veteran army broke through, the Germans had to rush pell-mell northwards.

At the same time, the 1st Army, in the north had done magnificent fighting. This fighting, unfortunately, and because of necessity, had to be done by brigades and smaller units, rather than by massed attacks, and the fighting had received less credit than it deserved. It also had the effect of weakening the enemy facing the 8th Army.

All this time the spear thrust had to be made by the 8th Army, with its 6 fine Divisions ready to attack at any time. When Gen. Montgomery lets them go, they go with élan, born of success.

Gen. Eisenhower said that 50 per cent of Axis shipping was sunk in transit across the Sicilian narrows—this was illustrative of the value of the air bases covering the whole area. 470 Axis aircraft had been shot down since March, and numerous others destroyed and damaged on the ground. The Allies lost 157.

CO-OPERATION.

Gen. Eisenhower added: "I regard Gen. Anderson's dispositioning of his armies not only as a fine example of Allied action, but as a very careful calculation of the enemy's reaction, balanced in accordance with what he could achieve.

"Co-operation and co-ordination is increasing daily. The American Forces improve in quality each day, and by the time the campaign is over, all will have a chance to stand up and cheer".

Gen. Eisenhower spoke of the gallantry of the French, who held the Dorsale region. The French were being re-equipped by the British and Americans. "Any soldier who kills a German is someone for whom I have the greatest affection. If I can give him equipment, enabling him to kill two Germans, by God, I am going to do it".

Gen. Eisenhower concluded by saying that the whole achievement would have been impossible, had not the Navy opened up the most eastern ports on the Tunisian coast, enabling the 1st Army to secure air-fields dominating the whole theatre of operations.

WEEKLY WAR SUMMARY.

17—4—43 to 23—4—43.

Russia.—The lull in the Russian battle continues, enforced by the weather. A state of uneasy equilibrium prevails all over the front, broken by occasional local engagements. German attempts to advance on LENINGRAD, in the BALAKLEYA and IREUM sectors of the Donetz and in the TAMAN (KUBAN) area have failed.

The Red Air Force has intensified its attacks on German territory. Within a week, KOENIGSBERG was raided four times, DANZIG twice and TILSIT once.

Tunisia.—The Battle of the tanks on the plains has ended, and the Battle of the Hills has begun. In the mountainous area around TUNIS Rommel stands at bay, screening himself behind difficult terrain. But the Allied Armies are pushing on. The Eighth Army is probing along the ENFIDAVILLE line.* The First Army is advancing from MEDJEZ EL BAB towards TABOURBA; and the French Army, attacking from PONT DU FAHS, has captured JEBEL JEHES. On Sunday (April 18) fighters of the Desert Air Force engaged 100 enemy transport aircraft and their fighter escort over the Mediterranean, as they were flying from CAPE BON towards SICILY. They were spotted in the afternoon, and in a single engagement 74 of the enemy aircraft were shot down, and 30 more were damaged. While it was practically an 'all American' victory it is learnt that the R. A. F. fighters provided the top-cover. Commenting on the event *Reuter's* Military correspondent observes :—

'There must have been indications that the Axis was preparing to evacuate technical personnel and other elements not directly employed in active operations. There would be a large percentage of the administrative staff. The loss of such specialised troops will be a serious blow to the Axis. Ju. 52 transport aircraft can hold 45 men on an average, probably 50 with a squeeze. 58 of these aircraft would therefore represent nearly 3,000 men, in addition to the crews of 16 Messerschmitts.

* ENFIDAVILLE has been captured.—*Ed.*

The Pacific.—Following on the concentration of Japanese forces on the islands of KISKA and ATTU, in the ALEUTIANS, American Air and Naval Forces have intensified their attacks in the North Pacific. In the course of a month 9 aerial attacks have heen carried out on KISKA, dropping 1,000 bombs totalling 500,000 pounds. In addition, American Naval surface Forces bombarded KISKA twice in the same period.

The following is a summary of the air activities for the week :—

(*a*) *Allied Raids*—

April 11—REKATA BAY : Japanese bases in the SOLOMONS ; KAHILI ; MUNDA ; KISKA.

April, 12—VILA and RINGI (both in KOLOMBANGARA Island).

April, 14—MUNDA and BIRU (both in NEW GEORGIA) ; KISKA.

April, 15—MUNDA ; VILA ; REKATA BAY.

April, 26—KAHILI ; BALLALE ; AMBOINA ; ATTU ; KISKA. (On the same day a 5,000 ton Japanese vessel was attacked in the Bismarck Sea).

April, 18—KAHILI, (A Japanese convoy of 6 cargo vessels was attacked in the harbour of WEWAK, of which 4 were sunk and 2 damaged).

(*b*) *Japanese Air-Raids*—

April, 14—MILNE BAY. (The enemy lost 30 out of his 80 aircraft).

April, 16—GUADALCANAR. (The damage and casualties were slight).

China—Japanese attacks on HYAYUNG, and on the areas east of ICHANG and north-east of CANTON and an enemy attempt to cross the Ko river, were all repulsed. The Chinese attacked CHAOSIEN (N. HUPEH) on the Yangtse, and CHEFOO in the SHANTUNG Peninsula.

Burma.—For a month past RANGOON port has been practically denied to the enemy. Docks and approaches have been seriously damaged. Over 200 miles from the harbour at sea enemy vessels are being constantly sunk.

The following were the air-raids of the week :—

(*a*) **Allied.**—*April 12* :—YEYANBYIN ; AVONGDAING ; EHKAUNG ; PALETWA ; NABA ; AKYAB.

April 13 :—MAYU RIDGE ; SHADZUP ; NANYASEIK ; TINGPAI ; MAGWE.

April 14 :—MANYWET ; MYITKYINA ; MONYWA, (6 Japanese launches carrying Japanese troops off RAMREE Island, and 3 supply lorries north of PINTHA and near KATHA were destroyed).

April 15 :—Japanese head quarters near YUWA ; Thilawa Oil Refineries.

April 16 :—Railway bridges near PINBAW and MOGAUNE ; THAZI ; MAWLUN ; THINGNET ; enemy-occupied positions on AKYAB Island.

April 17 :—Seven Japanese-occupied villages in the FOUL POINT area on AKYAB Island ; enemy concentrations in the MAYU Peninsula ; NABA Railway Junction.

A Japanese attempt, on April 14, to infiltrate in the GUINDAW area was frustrated.

ALLIED AIR RAIDS.

11—4—43 (Sunday).

EUROPE.

DAY :—

Railway workshops at MALINES (Belgium).
A factory at HENGELO (2 allied planes missing).

NIGHT:—

The harbour at NAPLES (Italy).

TUNISIA and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Enemy positions, armoured cars and vehicles near ENFIDAVILLE.
Enemy vehicles in the KAIRWAN area.
Docks and shipping at TUNIS, LAMARSALLA (Sicily) and TRAPANI (Sicily).
Enemy air fields in TUNISIA including that at ST. MARIE DUZID.
The docks and shipping at BIZERTA.

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all oyer the RUSSIAN front.

FAR EAST.

KISKA (Aleutians).
MUNDA and **KAHILI** (Solomons).
MYITKYINA railway line near KATA (Burma).
Village on the MAYU Peninsula.
Two places on the ARAKAN coast (Burma).
REKATA BAY.

12—4—43. (Monday).

EUROPE.

NIGHT :—

Air-field, Railway junction and military stores at KOENIGSBERG (East Russia).
The harbour at NAPLES (Italy).
COSENZA, COTRONE, and **PIZZO.**

TUNISIA and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Axis tanks and other armoured vehicles in the ENFIDAVILLE area (Tunisia).
Air-fields near TUNIS.
The harbour and shipping at BIZERTA.
Air-fields at MILO and CASTEL VETRANO (Sicily).

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

VILA (Kolambangara Island).
RINGI (near Vila)
KISKA (Aleutians).
WALABUM (Burma).
YEGYANBYIN and **AVONGDAING** (Akyab Island).
NABA junction (Burma).
PALETWA (Burma).
AKYAB (Burma).
The air base at MAGWE (Burma).

13—4—43 (Tuesday).

EUROPE.

DAY :—

Axis shipping off NORWAY.
Railway yards at CAEN and ABBEVILLE (France) (2 enemy planes and 3 Allied planes destroyed).

NIGHT :—

The Naval base at SPEZIA (Italy).

TUNISIA and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Sweeps and patrols over the battle areas in TUNISIA.
Enemy air-fields in TUNISIA.
EL AQUINA (Tunisia).

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

A road bridge at SHADZUP (Burma).
NANYASEIK (Burma).
Railway trucks near TINGPAI.
KISKA (Aleutians).
MUNDA (New Georgia).

14—4—43 (Wednesday).

EUROPE.

DAY :—

Targets in north-west Germany.
Shipping off the coast of BRITTANY.
Railway yards in FRANCE.
Trains and transports in BELGIUM.

NIGHT :—

KOENIGSBURG and DANZIG.
Armament and Engineering works at STUTTGART (23 Allied planes missing).

TUNISIA and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Enemy positions and transport in TUNISIA.
Enemy air-fields in TUNISIA.
ELMAS and MONDERRATO (both in Sardinia).
Air-fields at DECIMOMANNU (Sardinia) and PANTELLARIA (Sicily).
Shipping at Port EMPEDOCLE.

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN front.

FAR EAST.

KISKA (Aleutians).
VILA (Kolambangara).
KAHILI (Shortlands).
A supply lorry north of TAUNGUP (Burma).
River launches of the MAYU (Burma).
Rolling stock near KATHA.

15—4—43 (Thursday).

EUROPE.

DAY :—(2 enemy planes and 3 Allied planes lost).

Armed trawlers off the DUTCH coast.
Enemy air-fields near LE HAVRE.
Shipping and docks at CHERBOURG (France).
Goods trains, a factory and road transport in Northern FRANCE.

NIGHT :—

German road and rail communications in north-west GERMANY, BELGIUM and northern FRANCE
NAPLES and MESSINA (Italy).

TUNISIA and the MEDITERRANEAN.

PALERMO, CATANIA (all in Sicily).
Tanks and vehicles in Tunisian battle fields.
Air-fields in TUNISIA.

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

A Jap convoy off WEWAK.
Jap air-field at WEWAK (N. Guinea).
Thilawa oil refinery south of RANGOON.
Rail road yards at YWATAUNG and MANDALAY (Burma).
Rail road installations at NABA (Burma).

16—4—43 (Friday).

EUROPE.

DAY:—

Shipping at LE HAVRE (France).
Air-field at TRICQUEVILLE (France).
Industrial targets at OSTEND.
Port areas of LORIENT and BREST (France).
Railway targets at HAARLEM (Netherlands).

NIGHT:— (55 Allied planes missing).

Skoda armament works at PILSEN (Czechoslovakia),
Armament centres of MANNHEIM and LUDWIGSHAFEN (Germany).

TUNISIA and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Tanks and other vehicles in the ENFIDAVILLE area.
Air-field at OUDA (near Tunis).
Merchant men off TUNISIA.
Shipping at PALERMO (Sicily).
The docks at BIZERTA.

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

ATTU Islands.
KISKA (Aleutians).
Shipping at KAHILI and BALLALE.
Railroad bridges near PINBAW and MOGAUNG (Burma).
Railway junction at THAZI (Burma).
Railway station at MAWLUN (Burma).
Villages on the AKYAB Island.

17—4—43. (Saturday).

EUROPE.

DAY:—

The aircraft factory at BREMEN.
Railway yards at ABBEVILLE (France).
Railway centre at CAEN (France).
Industrial plant at ZEEBRUGGE (Belgium).
Shipping off the coast of BRITTANY.
Locomotives in northern FRANCE.

NIGHT:—(3 Allied planes missing).

Laying mines in enemy waters.
Enemy transport in HOLLAND, FRANCE and GERMANY.
Railway power stations between PARIS and LEMANS.

TUNISIA and the MEDITERRANEAN.

(29 enemy planes shot down and 8 Allied planes missing).

Axis air-fields at ST. MARIE, SEBELLA and EDID.
The docks at FERRY VILLE and PALERMO (Sicily).
The harbour at CATANIA (Sicily).
Air-field at BISCARIC (Sicily).
A factory at SYRACUSE (Sicily).
Lines of enemy communications in TUNISIA.

RUSSIA

(For the week 10—4—43 to 17—4—43 Russians lost 103 planes; and the Axis lost 302 planes).

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

The dock area at AMBOINA.
KISKA (Aleutians).
ATTU Islands.
Jap occupied village in the AKYAB area (Burma).
Enemy concentrations on the coast of MAYU Peninsula.
The railway junction at NABA (Burma).

ENEMY AIR RAIDS.

12—4—43 (Monday).

BRITAIN.

Coastal districts in East ANGLIA and South-east ENGLAND. (1 enemy plane destroyed).

TUNISIA.

No information.

RUSSIA.

VOLKHOV area.

FAR EAST.

Allied shipping at Oro (New Guinea) (23 enemy planes lost).

13—4—43 (Tuesday).

BRITAIN.

No air activity anywhere in BRITAIN.

NORTH AFRICA.

Air combats over the coasts of ALGERIA (3 enemy planes shot down).

RUSSIA.

No information.

FAR EAST.

PORT MORESBY (32 enemy planes shot down or damaged).

14—4—43 (Wednesday).

BRITAIN.

A LONDON area; THAMES ESTUARY (3 axis planes shot down).

TUNISIA.

Air combats over the battle-fields (2 enemy planes destroyed).

FAR EAST.

MILNE BAY (New Guinea) (30 Jap planes shot down).

15—4—43 (Thursday).

BRITAIN.

No information available.

TUNISIA.

British 1st army's forward **Positions.**

RUSSIA.

An air-field in the IZYUM area.

FAR EAST.

Air-field at GUADALCANAR, (Solomons).

16—4—43 (Friday).

BRITAIN.

No air raid anywhere in BRITAIN.

TUNISIA.

Forward positions of the 8th army.

RUSSIA.

Russian Positions on the upper DONETZ area.

FAR EAST.

The air-field at GUADALCANAR.

17—4—43 (Saturday).

BRITAIN.

East ANGLIA and **one place** in S. E. ENGLAND.

TUNISIA.

ALGIERS area (15 nuns killed).

RUSSIA.

Air combats over the TAMANN bridgehead.

FAR EAST.

(8 enemy planes shot down). **Air combats** over the Kahili area (Shortlands).

18—4—43 (Sunday).

BRITAIN.

LONDON area; South East ENGLAND.

TUNISIA.

No information available.

RUSSIA.

Reconnaissance over the BALAKLEYA area.

FAR EAST.

No information.

SIDE LIGHTS.

LEGEND AND HISTORY. TUNISIA! What memories does the name evoke, of ancient and modern times, of history and legend. It was the scene of Dido's hopeless love. Near the site of modern TUNIS once stood CARTHAGE, with its Phoenician settlements, the centre of the world's sea-borne trade. Here the military genius of Hannibal rose and fell, thwarted by Scipio Africanus; here the Punic wars were fought and CARTHAGE was razed to the ground. For six days and nights, says the Chronicler, the Carthaginians were massacred, and the city was burnt and ploughed up to remove the last traces of it. On these ruins rose ROME. The Muslim power followed. In A. D. 671 (A. H. 50), as the legends tell, Okba Ibn Nafi led his faithful followers here, and exhorting, in the name of the Prophet, the serpents and the beasts to depart, struck his spear in the ground, exclaiming, 'Qairwan' (Resting Place); and thus rose KAIRWAN, the most sacred Islamic city after MECCA and MEDINA, famous for its mosques and Saracenic art.

In modern times the interference of EUROPE in the country became pronounced. Here BRITAIN built TUNISIA's first railway, and FRANCE established a Protectorate, strengthening BIZERTA at the Mediterranean narrows to prevent Italian aggression.

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THE MEDITERRANEAN COCK-PIT. Now, on this historic ground, appropriately called the Mediterranean cock-pit, driven from pillar to post, cornered and battered, the Axis forces stand at bay, the Eighth and First Armies pressing them from different sides, assisted by American and French Forces. The choice left to the enemy is a second CARTHAGE, STALINGRAD or DUNKIRK; either destruction on land, or annihilation during evacuation by sea.

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AXIS TREPIDATION. Private reports from ITALY *via* STOCKHOLM suggest that Mussolini, under Hitler's orders, has preferred evacuation, and is massing a 'DUNKIRK' fleet for the rescue. According to other reports Italian naval units have been withdrawn from Greek Waters to defend the Sicilian narrows. Unconfirmed advices from ZURICH state that Axis troops in N. AFRICA are already being evacuated to SICILY, SARDINIA and GREECE.

A more authentic message reports the issue of a Decree by Mussolini, proclaiming SICILY, SARDINIA, PANTELLARIA and the Islands of the Straits of MESSINA as operational areas, with himself as 'Supreme Commander'. Hitler has also issued orders for the evacuation of the French ports.

Rommel has flown to ITALY and GERMANY to meet his chiefs; Hitler and Mussolini have met at the BRENNER Pass; the Hungarian Minister has

been to ROME, and King Boris of BULGARIA and Gen. Antonescu of RUMANIA have conferred with Hitler. The tyrants and their satellites are getting nervous.

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SLOW BUT CERTAIN. But the day of the clearing of the Axis from N. AFRICA, though certain, may yet be delayed awhile. Rommel, an able General, but no 'superman', as Gen. Eisenhower has said, with a force of 150,000 Germans and 60,000 Italians, is doing all he can to slow down the Allied advance. The allied thrusts now lie in difficult country. The coastal corridar from ENFIDAVILLE to HAMMAMET is narrow and marshy. The road from HAMMAMET to TUNIS is hilly. In the far north, the coastal route to BIZERTA crosses quicksands. The going is difficult, and the Axis forces contest every yard of the ground.

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THE RENDEZVOUS OVER GERMANY. The recurrence of Russian air-raids over KOENIGSBERG and DANZIG may be a prelude to an early joint air-offensive of the Allies over GERMANY. Then there will be a share-out—American planes by day, and British and Russian planes by night; again the R. A. F. over Western EUROPE and the Red Air Force over Eastern. This will lead to Allied concentration in narrower areas, accompanied by a simultaneous weakening of Axis defence.

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CRIME AND SLANDER. Present German propaganda relating to the disappearance of certain Polish prisoners of war, shows to what depths of slander and infamy Goebbels is prepared to go to divide the Allies-this time, POLAND from RUSSIA. In 1939, during the Russo-German invasion of POLAND, the Russians took 181,000 Poles including about 10,000 officers prisioners and detained them. But on the conclusion of the Polish-Soviet Treaty they were released and permitted to enlist in the newly-forming Polish Army in RUSSIA. But strangely enough, of these prisioners, some 8,300 officers and 7,000 N. C. Os., soldiers and civilians had mysteriously disappeared. The Germans now say that the missing Polish officers were shot *en masse* by the Russian Ogpu in the spring of 1940, and buried in a wood near SMOLENSK. The Germans add that when they took SMOLENSK later they discovered the mass graves of the victims, together with identification papers on the corpses. The Russian Government, denying the charge has accused the Germans. A Soviet statement says :—

'The German statement leaves no doubt as to the tragic fate of the former Polish prisioners of war, who, in 1941 were engaged in construction work in the area west of SMOLENSK, and who, with many Soviet citizens, fell into the hands of the German Fascist hangmen after the Soviet retreat from the SMOLENSK area.

'There can be no doubt that Dr. Goebbels' slanders are now trying to cover up the bloody crimes of the Hitlerite gangster by lies.

'In their clumsily-concocted falsifications about the numerous graves, which the Germans are supposed to have discovered near SMOLENSK, the Hitlerites speak of the village of GNESDOVAYA, but they are silent about the fact that just there, in the vicinity of GNESDOVAYA are to be found archaelogical excavations of the historical GNESDOVAYA burial-ground. Past masters in such affairs, the Hitlerites committed the clumsiest forgery and misrepresentation of acts in spreading slanderous tales about some sort of Soviet outrages in the spring of 1940, trying, in this way, to shake off responsibility for the brutal crimes carried out by the Hitlerites'.

In these mutual recriminations, one circumstance is highly damaging to the Germans. Why did the Germans, who have been in possession of SMOLENSK for nearly two years claim suddenly and now to have discovered the graves? Why did they not make the announcement earlier?

The Poles, naturally grieved for their missing countrymen have appealed to the International Red-Cross to investigate.

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GERMAN PROPAGANDA. There are other evidences to show that German propaganda is getting from bad to worse and even silly. It tries to sow discord between AMERICA and BRITAIN by stating that the U. S. object in building ships now is to oust BRITAIN from the world's markets after the war. The devastating R. A. F. raids are denied to have any military value. The Tunisian defeats are deliberately played down, in order to prepare the Germans for the coming reverses; while with a regularity and persistence, worthy of a better achievement, the U-boat successes are acclaimed as if to drown other sorrows, and with a dreadful monotony the gong beats at intervals, announcing 'sinking' real or supposed.

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THE QUEEN'S MESSAGE. Breaking a long silence, the Queen spoke to her sisters in the Empire on Sunday last and delivered a message of love and hope. In a voice charged with emotion she referred to 'the years of tragedy and glory' and proudly asked, 'What have the women done, or rather, not done?' Women's part in the war has been one of great but silent heroism. Presenting a courageous front at home they have inspired their husbands and sons on the battle front. 'You have' the Queen added, 'endured the enemy's bombs, you tended those he maimed, you tilled our land, you have, in uniform or out of it, given help to our fighting forces and made for them those munitions without which they would be powerless.' We wish we in INDIA deserved this tribute. But our sisters in BRITAIN have done all this and more. A communiqué of the U. S. War Information Bureau reports that 40% of Production Workers in BRITAIN are women, and that they are working long hours and with extraordinary efficiency in the air-craft, tank and munition factories, in the shipyards, on the rail-roads, and on the land and in lumber camps.

With a true womanly instinct, the Queen took care to add that valuable as these services now were, Woman's place is the home, and reminded the

Beveridges and Churchills of the future that in any scheme of post-war planning the women who represented the family life had a part to play. Women were not robots, as the Nazis have made them. One other badly needed warning she gave. Religion was the foundation of life as the woman was of Home.

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BRITAIN'S WAR BUDGET. The budget which Sir Kingsley Wood presented to the Parliament on April 12 was the largest in British History, as the following astronomical figures show :—

1. The budget estimate £ 6,000 million.
2. Cost of war for the year £ 13,000 million.
3. Total war expenditure, hitherto £ 15,600 million.
4. Supplies from U. S. £ 1,500 million.
5. British munitions to RUSSIA £ 170,000,000.
6. BRITAIN'S daily war expenditure £ 15 million.
7. British borrowings for the war period £ 8,667,000,000.
8. Cost of TUNISIA and BURMA campaigns. Between £ 400 and 590 millions a year.
9. Taxation, last year £ 2,483 million.
10. Taxation, this year £2,907 million.

The higher taxation of the year, which will fall particularly on beer, tobacco, entertainments and luxuries, is expected to raise the revenue to 56% of the war expenditure against 52% of last year.

The continuous applause which greeted the Chancellor, when he announced the new taxes, bespeaks the Nation's determination to make every sacrifice to win the war, and offers an interesting contrast to the people's reaction in the Axis countries to their budgetary proposals. In January last, for instance, the Italian Cabinet, in presenting its budget did not reveal the actual deficit, for fear of discontent in the country.

Let INDIA note the extent of her indebtedness to the British Exchequer in the matter of her own defence. BRITAIN has completely taken over the defence of INDIA outside her frontiers. The campaign in BURMA, which is in INDIA'S defence is costing BRITAIN a good bit. INDIA'S war provision of Rs. 199 crores pales into insignificance, compared with the United Kingdom's Rs. 7,800 crores.

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GIRAUD'S MEMORANDUM. Giraud has issued a memorandum which is to serve as a basis for his negotiations with de Gaulle. It provides for setting up a 'French Council of Overseas Territories' composed of Governors, Residents and Commissioners of these territories. The Council is to be empowered to treat with other Powers, to finance a common administration, and own a single army which will play its part in the war. It will also maintain contact with FRANCE, and help her to get free. When the war is over, it will take its place at the Council table of

the United Nations, in the name of FRANCE, and finally transfer its powers to a Government instituted under French Law.

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BURMA. March has proved a month of sustained air-operations over BURMA. The R. A. F. and the U. S. A. A. F. between them have attacked targets up and down the country from MYITKYINA to RANGOON. Enemy aerodromes, especially, the important base at TOUNGOO were bombed on 14 nights. Eight attacks were made on AKYAB. Enemy communications were hammered, including 3 attacks on the Marshalling yards at MANDALAY. THAZI, KATHA, NABA and other traffic centres were bombed. The enemy's attempt to repair the Mytinge Bridge near MANDALAY was interfered with by 9 attacks. Goktaik Viaduct was raided 6 times, and Pazundaung Bridge 5 times.,

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LEND-LEASE AND INDIA. Mr. F. W. Becker, Chairman, U. S. Lend-Lease Mission, has rendered a public service by explaining the true nature of Lend-Lease. He said :—

'In some quarters in INDIA Lend-Lease is regarded as the opening wedge for a policy of U. S. 'Imperialism' or 'dollar-diplomacy.' Nothing could be further from the truth.

'Lend-Lease is a war measure. It is not, as the Axis broadcasts would have one believe, a means of selfish advancement of national or commercial interest. On the contrary it represents a sacrifice by the people and Government of the U. S. They are going without weapons, materials and industrial equipment in order to send them to other countries, including INDIA under Lend-Lease.

'But they are glad to do this. They realise to the full the tragic consequences of Japanese and Nazi domination, and are happy to tighten their own belts, so that INDIA and other countries may receive the weapons, equipment and materials most essential to their own defence, and to enable them to make their most effective contribution to the common effort.

'The transfers made under the Lend-Lease Act are not commercial loans to other Nations. They are contributions of material to a common pool, with which a common war is being waged.

'In return other United Nations are contributing their utmost to the common fight in men, materials and machines, and are furnishing us with the weapons and supplies, which we, rather than they can most effectively use.

'The U. S. is deeply appreciative of the reciprocal aid which INDIA is rendering to the American Forces in INDIA. This aid typifies the true spirit of Lend-Lease mutual assistance and sacrifice by all the United Nations to accomplish our common end, the final and crushing defeat of the Axis.

'To date Lend-Lease aid has come to INDIA by way of re-transfer from the United Kingdom. Discussions are now under way concerning the possibility of a direct Lend-Lease agreement between INDIA and the U. S.'

WOMEN AND THE WAR.

The Queen's Broadcast to The Women of The Empire.

In these years of tragedy and glory, of crushing sorrow and splendid achievement, you women have earned the gratitude and admiration of all mankind. It is high time someone told you so.

"What have I done," you may ask, "compared to what my boy has put up with dodging submarines in the Atlantic, or chasing Rommel across Africa?"

In your different spheres, you have done all that he has done and endured all that he has endured. For, you like him, have given all that is good in you, regardless of yourself, to the same cause for which he is fighting—our cause, the cause of right against wrong.

Constantly travelling, as the King and I do, through the length and breadth of these islands, I am fortunate in being able to see a clear picture of the astonishing work women are doing everywhere, and of the quiet heroism with which, day in and day out, they are doing it. This picture, I know, is being reproduced in many similar aspects all over the Empire, from the largest self-governing Dominion to the smallest island owing allegiance to the Crown. We are, indeed, very proud of you.

How often have I talked with women engaged on every kind of job, sometimes physically hard or dangerous. Their courage is reinforced by one of the strongest weapons in our national armour—the sense of humour that nothing can daunt. With this weapon of amazing temper, our people keep guard over their sanity and their soul. Your work, whatever it may be, is just as valuable, just as much war work, as that which is done by the bravest soldier, sailor, or airman, who actually meets the enemy in battle.

And have you not met the enemy too? You endured his bombs, you tended those he maimed, you tilled our land, you have, in uniform or out of it, given help to our fighting forces, and made for them those munitions without which they would be powerless. In a hundred ways you have filled the places of the men who have gone away to fight.

WE SHALL NOT FAIL.

All of us women love family life, our homes and our children, and you may be sure that our men overseas are thinking just as wistfully of these homes as we are. These men, both at home and abroad, are counting on us at all times to be steadfast and faithful. I know we shall not fail them, but fortified by the great experience of our strength in unity, go forward with them, undismayed, into the future. I feel that in all the thinking and planning which we are doing for the welfare of our country and the Empire—and concern for other countries too—we, women, as home-makers have a part to play.

I keenly look for that re-building of family life as soon as the war ends. It is on the strength of our spiritual life that the right re-building of our national life depends.

THE BRITISH PREMIER'S TRIBUTE TO THE INDIAN SOLDIER.

We have watched with admiration the splendid achievements of the 4th Indian Division in the battle of Mareth, and in the recent victory at Wadi Akarit. The high renown of India's soldiers, and of the redoubtable Gurkha troops, has been enhanced by the outstanding performance of the Indian Army in all the campaigns of the Middle East.

I take this occasion to express to the Princes and people of India, and to our firm friend H. H. the Maharaja of Nepal, our admiration and gratitude for all that the Indian Army has done in Africa, in the Far East, and in India itself.

We take pride that India's fighting men should now share in the successes which have crowned the long uphill contest in which they have played so valiant a part.

PEACE AND LIBERTY.

(*President ROOSEVELT—April 13*).

(*In a speech dedicating the Jefferson Shrine at Washington*).

Jefferson faced the fact that men who will not fight for Liberty can lose it. We too have faced the fact.

Jefferson loved Peace ; he loved Liberty—yet on more than one occasion he was forced to choose between peace and liberty. We, too, seem compelled to make that choice. Thomas Jefferson believed, as we believe, that men are capable of their own Government, that no tyrant, no dictator can govern for them as wisely as they can govern for themselves. He believed, as we believe, in a certain inalienable right. He, as we, saw those principles and freedoms challenged. He fought for them, as we fight for them.

Among all the people of the earth, and their cruelties and oppressions, its would be masters have taught this generation what its liberties can mean. This lesson, so bitterly learned, will never be forgotten, while this generation lives.

The words which we have chosen for this memorial speak of Jefferson's nobility and most urgent meaning, and we are proud indeed to understand and share it.

"I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of Man"

HOW THE GERMANS ARE BUYING UP EUROPE.

(*From the Observer*).

Whether Germany will be called upon to pay reparations as part of the post-war settlement is a matter of policy on which the allied Governments have as yet had little to say.

It is the Nazis who have evolved the most effective technique in history for the exaction of tribute.

Many and varied are the tricks which make up their technique of exploitation. They include undisguised robbery, carried out chiefly in Eastern Europe. They include blackmail, by which the industry of occupied Europe is forced to work for Germany because it would not otherwise receive raw materials. And they include various kinds of chicanery, through the manipulation of prices and exchange rates, to raise the price of the few goods Germany sells and to lower the price of the many things she "buys".

"RESPECTABILITY".

Most ingenious of all are the methods by which the ordinary financial system is adapted to give an appearance of respectability to exploitation. In the last analysis, this always comes down to inflation of the currencies of occupied Europe for the benefit of Germany. Nationals of the conquered countries sell things to Germany against payment in their local currency, the paper means of payment—since Germany's exactions far outrun ordinary sources of revenue—being created by their own central banks.

The most familiar use of this technique is the system by which Germany obtains goods from the whole of Europe without sending equivalent goods in exchange. A seller in France, for example, exports to Germany, nominally against payment in Reichsmarks. These marks he then sells to the Bank of France in exchange for francs. Net result: Germany has the goods, the Bank of France has some more frozen Reichsmark claims on its clearing account, and the inflation of the French currency has been carried a little farther.

Anything from 40 to 80 per cent. of the "assets" of the European central banks now consist of such clearing balances as the counterpart of the inflationary additions to their local note circulations. Figures of the piling up of such clearing claims would be tedious and difficult to translate into real terms. But it can be said that the resources secured by Germany in this way must rival the aid this country has received from the Empire on credit, or through Canada's outright gift, and from the United States on Lend-Lease.

But the Germans are not content with filching the current output of the conquered countries. Similar methods are being used to rob these countries of their industrial capital. Thus in France the so-called occupation costs are greatly in excess of the sums needed to maintain the army of occupation. The balance is available to buy up shares in French concerns.

A pamphlet just published by the Inter-Allied Information Committee shows how far this, "Penetration of German Capital into Europe" has now gone. Most significant of all is the acquisition by German banks of control over banks in the occupied countries, because under Continental banking methods important industrial concerns are often controlled by banks.

COMMUNICATIONS IN HITLER'S EUROPE UNDER FIRE.

The R. A. F. offensive is not a campaign to terrorise and murder civilians, such as the *Luftwaffe* attempted to perpetrate over Britain two years ago, but it is directed against military targets in Germany and German-occupied territory. The destruction of the German land-transport system is one of the R. A. F's primary objectives. Concentrated attacks on great railway centres like Hamm and Rouen, rapier thrusts by small forces against such targets as the railway viaduct at Morlaix, the lock-gates at Ouistreham or the locomotive repair depôt at Paderborn all serve the same end. It may be noted in passing that, since the beginning of 1943, the R. A. F. has been destroying Hitler's locomotives at the rate of three a day.

NAZI LIFE-LINE.

Just as the British war-economy depends on the life-line across the Atlantic from America and Canada, the German war-economy depends on the railway system which has to transport every day thousands of tons of arms and ammunition, from the Ruhr to the Dnieper, and raw materials from the North Sea ports or the Baltic countries to the Ruhr or the industrial districts of Central Germany, Upper Silesia and the "Protectorate" of Bohemia-Moravia. It is obvious, therefore, that any disorganisation of the European railway system would seriously affect the position of the German armies on the battle-fronts. The systematic destruction of railway stations, marshalling yards, goods trains and railway engines also "drains" away, from the traffic point of view, the country behind the German armies on the European coast, a process whose importance will be fully realised only when the Anglo-American forces invade Western Europe.

TRANSPORT SYSTEM.

To understand the effect of the Allied air offensive, it is necessary to glance at the transport system of Germany which is now being subjected to a protracted pummelling. The territory which the German State Railways have to serve is now five times as large as it was in 1937. The combined length of railway lines is 3½-times what it was six years ago. Neither the number of locomotives nor that of goods trucks has kept pace with this extension.

According to official figures, the number of railway engines in Germany was 23,700 in the last year before the war, corresponding to one engine for every three Kilometres of railway line. After the seizure of the rolling stock of the occupied countries, the Reich State Railways had altogether 58,500 locomotives. The length of the railway lines throughout the system, however, had increased from 61,586 to 216,000 Kilometres which meant one locomotive to every four Kilometres of railway line. The situation is much the same as regards goods trucks.

Even in the last year before the war the upkeep of engines and trucks was much neglected in Germany. While, before Hitler's time, the number of locomotives under repair always amounted to some 20-23 per cent of the total, in the year 1938 this rate had dropped to 13.15 per cent and in 1942 to

only 8 or 9 per cent. According to official estimates, the Reich railways are short of at least 60,000 locomotives and 112,000 goods trucks.

It must also be borne in mind that today the German railways have to serve the whole of occupied Russia. Not one German goods truck, not one railway engine can be used (without adaptation), because the Russian railways have a broader gauge than that commonly used in Western Europe.

EFFECT OF AIR ATTACKS.

In normal times, leaving the Danube out of account, nearly all the exports from south-east Europe to Germany went by sea—from Constanza, Salonika and the Piraeus through the Mediterranean and the Atlantic to Antwerp, Rotterdam, Bremen and Hamburg. This route is now eliminated by the British blockade. The traffic has, therefore, been diverted to land routes, to the roads and railways which are already so inadequate. The results are obvious. Ten long freight trains now do the work which was done by a 6,000 ton cargo ship. Before 1939 a German tanker could bring Rumanian oil by way of the Mediterranean and the English Channel to Bremen or Hamburg; now it takes 400 tank cars to do what a single tanker did formerly. Similarly, the transport of 1,000,000 tons of coal a month from Germany to Italy ties up 27,000 goods wagons and 700 locomotives. R. A. F. attacks on the available means of land transport force the enemy to resort to coastal shipping to relieve the overstrained railway system. Bombing and coastal minelaying also causes congestion and crisis at North German ports during the Spring months, particularly at Hamburg. Iron ore shipments from Swedish ports have therefore to be re-routed to Rotterdam. But this re-routing has the effect of exposing the limited merchant tonnage available to Germany to heavy attacks by the R. A. F. off the Frisian Islands.

SITUATION NOW.

Even at the beginning of the war the German transport system was by no means in a satisfactory position. The incorporation of the rolling stock of the occupied countries has not solved the problem. The Soviet removal or destruction of their broad gauge locomotives and rolling stock has forced the Germans to alter the gauge, and use their own transport resources over some 17,500 miles, equal to half the route mileage of the *Reichsbahn* in 1937. Germany can no longer use with safety the open sea route for trade, which means that an additional strain is thrown on the creaking land-transport system. It is not difficult therefore to imagine what the concentrated Anglo-American attack on the German transport system means. Here then is point where one of the important (though not spectacular) battles of the war is being fought.

PRE-REQUISITES OF INVASION.

(*Lieut.-General Sir Douglas Brownrigg.*)

The Casablanca conference promised an invasion of Nazi-controlled Europe. Many amateur strategists are not unnaturally considering ways and means of doing it.

The Chiefs of Staff are the only people who have all the relevant facts before them, and are the only men who are responsible for carrying out the advice they tender.

But, for the sake of those who speculate, I want to enumerate very briefly a few factors which must influence the decision when and where to invade the realms of Nazidom. There are many others but I only want to touch on five.

1. Size of the force required to give a reasonable chance of success against the enemy forces likely to be encountered.

2. Air-cover which can be given at the places selected having particular regard to the fighting range of single-seater fighter aircraft.

3. Shipping required to carry the expeditionary force, with special reference to the fact that our convoys still have to plough their way round the Cape, thus wasting countless tons of shipping space.

4. Shipping required to maintain the force ashore, once landed.

5. The final objective—after landing.

Let me take these points in turn.

Naturally, the forces available cannot be divulged but figures of the last war are illuminating. Allied forces in France and Flanders when the Germans asked for armistice in 1918 amounted to 207 divisions. I do not suggest that modern open mechanised warfare necessarily requires as many troops as trench warfare. Nor am I going to attempt to make numerical comparisons or forecasts. But I suggest that it would be unwise to start an invasion of the Continent before we were sure that we had both numbers and equipment to make the project a reasonable one.

UMBRELLA OF FIGHTER.

It is suicidal to attempt an opposed landing without an adequate umbrella of fighter aircraft. The effective fighting range of single-seater shore-based fighters may be taken as something less than 100 miles. Take a pair of compasses and use that distance to mark off the possible places of landing. It will surprise the student of war to see the result.

It took 500 transports and 350 warships to take the expeditionary force to Africa. Of course, continental Europe is much closer and ships could do many journeys for every one possible to North Africa. But let us remember that our convoys to Egypt and the East will have to go round the Cape whilst others keep the North African forces supplied. There has been no saving yet of shipping. We are living on our capital.

The first dividend on our North African investment will be the first convoy which sails safely through the Sicilian narrows.

Assuming that the second front takes place somewhere in France, we shall not have to face long journeys for our supply vessels but we shall want many more of them than in 1939. We then lived largely on French local supplies. France is now on the edge of starvation. We must carry all we want.

I suppose most people think that Berlin must be the ultimate objective. The R. A. F. have, so to speak, started the opening bombardment, but the army will have to get there to "finish the job".

JAPAN SUMMONS CONFERENCE OF MUSLIMS.

(*Far East News Letter.*)

The announcement on April Ist that the Japanese are summoning a meeting of delegates of the ten million Muslims of Malaya and Sumatra to a conference at Singapore on April 5th and 6th indicates that orders have come from the top to step up the tempo. It is said that the Muslims are "keenly alive to the growing importance of the róle they have to play in the great task of constructing East Asia", and that the meeting will give "a definite trend" to the Muslims in Asia and throughout the world.

The Japanese find the Muslim a hard-headed, sceptical person who is not easily gulled and who is swift to resent a slight. They have hitherto shown extreme caution in their efforts to persuade him to hitch his wagon to the Co-Prosperity or Co-Extinction comet. Their broadcasts have been careful to avoid giving the slightest indication of Japanese interference with the Muslim religion and culture. Various measures adopted from time to time to regulate Muslim life were interpreted in the light of Japan's self-given róle as "Protector of Islam."

The Japanese seem to realise the basic opposition of the iconoclastic nature of Islam to the theory of Emperor-worship associated with Shinto. In the continuous war of cultures raging in occupied areas, where the Japanese seek to superimpose their own ideas on the deep-rooted native institutions, the Muslims form peculiarly difficult material, for none are more jealous of their religious institutions and traditions. They are not blind to the fact that the Japanese policy of "harmonizing the warring cultures" of East and South Asia is merely a euphemism for the penetration of Japanese culture, and the subversion of all non-Japanese institutions. Only by succeeding in this sphere can Japan hope to tighten her strangle-hold on the peoples of the occupied regions.

Japanese activities in the Muslim regions are essentially covert and insidious. Overt propaganda by radio and publicity aims at diverting the attention of the Muslims from the real blows which they seek to deliver at the very roots of Muslim civilization, and to focus it on changes which are full of form but lack substance.

The Japanese do not seek to develop native cultures; they seek to overthrow them and substitute Japanese culture with all its archaic ideology. Examples may be cited of some of these activities. There is, for instance, the compulsory teaching of the Japanese language as a medium of all instruction, which has nothing in common with Muslim languages.

Even the basic Arabic numeral system, of which the European system is a later development, is being replaced by the Japanese abacus.

Although the Japanese announced that they had graciously extended to the Muslims the privilege of using the Lunar calendar, for all practical purposes the Japanese calender is enforced in all occupied countries: (and Tokio time as well). The Muslims therefore have the right, but not the power or the freedom, to use the Muslim calendar.

Japanese religious holidays are enforced in Muslim as well as in non-Muslim occupied countries. The bowing at Japanese shrines, and the adoration of the Japanese Emperor as a god, are especially repugnant to Muslim religious susceptibilities, thought and principle.

It is significant that the initiative and control of Japanese-organised Muslim Associations, cultural institutes, libraries and conferences invariably rests with the Japanese military authorities. The co-operation of the Muslims, if any, is the result of tacit acquiescence, not of willing and enthusiastic participation.

In short, a despotic Military Administration which is alien in race, religion, culture and language,—alien in fact in its whole outlook on life—and unscrupulous in action and principle, rules in the Muslim regions of the Far East, with a view to effecting a wholesale Japanization of these regions and their peoples. There are common links between the Christian and Muslim cultures and traditions, and many of them are far greater than people with only a smattering of history appreciate. But Japanese culture and ideology and Muslim culture are worlds apart. Intelligent Muslims know that. They have no doubt made it manifest to the Japanese themselves.

AN UNHAPPY DICTATOR.

Far East News Letter—April 8—1943.

Marshal Pibul Songgram is of all the puppet Dictators the most miserable. He says so himself in language scarcely excelled for candour since the New Order was ushered in. During the last week-end he told educational officials under training at Bangkok that in spite of all the Government could do the Siamese refused to sell rice or rear and sell pigs, leaving the field free to the Chinese. Hairdressing courses had been arranged, but there were no pupils. The Government had tried to persuade the farmers to improve their lands and their seed paddy, "but they reviled us instead". The Government, he said, had done all possible to help, but it had totally failed. "Excuse my language, but that is the truth".

The Siamese Premier was even more candid in a message addressed to the people on Monday last over his own signature. There were, he admitted, many government officials, newspapermen and other Siamese who were very dissatisfied and criticised him on many things which he could not help at all. As a result things which ought to be kept secret got out to the enemy. "We

must fight this war in the dark", he added. He was also criticised for holding on to his post for personal and family reasons, and for using the Siamese religion for his personal benefit. This was untrue; he was sticking to his post for the sake of his beloved nation.

"There are many Thais who grumble that I should not have certain Ministers in my Cabinet, but what am I to do? I would certainly like to engage good Ministers for my Cabinet, to lighten my burdens, but I cannot find them. When I can find them, there are many reasons which I cannot explain why I cannot employ them. In a state of war, my dear Thais, you must follow your Leader. If you don't, how can you expect other nations to respect us, and how can you expect your Leader to be able to hold political conferences with other great nations? If you do not follow me, they will not believe me".

"Remember, my dear Thais," continues the Premier, "that the day when I explain to you every reason why I have done this and that, that very day our nation will break. Believe me, I cannot tell you everything. If I do so, our enemy will know it. If I keep silent, our nation will benefit by it. I assure you that the post of Premier is not so pleasant as you may think. I have told my Ministers to choose, together with other high authorities, a new Premier, and whenever they succeed in finding the right person, I will always be willing to make place for this new Premier, so that all of you may be happy and satisfied, and prosecute this war to a victorious end".

It is easy to read between the lines of this remarkable statement the difficulties the Siamese Dictator confronts not only among his own people but with the Japanese military in occupation, and to deduce from the Premier's statements the state of mind of the Siamese people.

JUNGLE FIRE.

As the weather in Arakan becomes hotter, and the foliage and undergrowth even drier, jungle fires are quickly started. They are beginning to have a tactical importance.

Shell fire and bombs have recently caused blazes on both sides of the lines. Already the wood burns like tinder, and the idea of setting it alight in order to smoke an enemy out of a position is becoming popular with friend and foe alike.

Warfare in these parts where open fighting is a rarity, and your foe is seldom seen, is necessarily full of ruses—as, for example, the harmless, but noisily disturbing crackers used by the enemy at night, and the frequent sallies made by ourselves in order to draw fire, and get information about opposing positions.

Perhaps the jungle blaze is the most effective ruse of all.

AN AMPHIBIAN TYPE OF WAR.

IMPORTANCE OF ARAKAN OPERATIONS.

(*By An Indian Army Observer*).

(*From Indian Information*).

This front in North Arakan, on which we have been pushing forward steadily, is surely one of the strangest on which men have ever fought.

By the standards of Russia, the Western Desert and North Africa, it is a campaign of small numbers, and minor victories or defeats. Its immediate outcome will not have decisive, shattering effects in the war against Japan. Yet it is a beginning, and the Commander-in-Chief, Field Marshal Sir Archibald Wavell, spoke of its value as a training ground for our troops, and of the moral importance of clearing the Japanese from this part of the Arakan coast. It is a battle between comparatively small parties. Elsewhere one counts in tens of thousands of men, thousands of tanks and hundreds of aircraft. Here one thinks in terms of hundreds of men, of no tanks, because the country is impossible for them, of always active, but scarcely armada-like, air support.

Thus it is a test of the individual, of his resource, his endurance, and his courage. That is where the value of training comes in.

MORAL EFFECT.

As for the moral effect of our success, anyone who, like myself, has seen the pleasure of the inhabitants at our return will have no doubts about that.

After months of disturbance under the Japanese, and of internal strife, in which scores of villages have been burned, and thousands of men, women and children killed, or left homeless, they see in the presence of Allied troops a promise of the law and order which the ravaged countryside sadly needs. The era of leaping flames is drawing to a close.

But it is the picturesque and often bizarre which leaps out at one time and again. The nature of the landscape is mainly responsible for this. We are in a world of rivers and creeks, muddy and tidal, with never more than a few miles of firm ground in between, except where the hills rise to razor-edge ridges up slopes matted with jungle.

MANGROVE-FRINGED WATERWAYS.

It follows, therefore, that scarcely ever has there been such an amphibian type of war. This does not imply the presence of fleets of warships, of flashing power boats thick as locusts, of swift waterborne forays. Instead, it comes down mostly to the humble sampan, with its one or two oarsmen, doing a job which we shall always remember with gratitude, however much, in the stress of the moment, we curse the slowness of progress.

The Jap makes the same use of the sampan, and in the present operations along the banks of the Mayu, he has had the advantage of controlling the mouth of the river, and in being able to use the innumerable, mangrove-fringed waterways which cut up the whole area between Akyab and Rathedaung. That is why the R. A. F. has lost no chance of pounding and raking with machine-gun fire anything that floats in these waters. What they are doing to Akyab itself needs no emphasis. From 20 or 30 miles away we hear the rumble of the bombs, and at night we see the sudden flashes.

Despite the great efforts of our engineers in building roads it is by sampan, and on your own flat feet, that you have to do most of your journeying. Supplies and ammunition travel the same way.

SAMPAN CONVOYS.

The sampan convoys, gliding along sunlit waters and through the misty nights, the chains of coolies travelling the tracks with their queer, half-running gait, or struggling over hills where tracks scarcely exist, are such usual sights that after a time, the sharply picturesque aspect may become dulled for the moment. For practical purposes the main effect is that one mile of this sort of travel equals at least five ordinary ones in time and effort, and is a factor for which allowance has to be made in all comings and goings.

The need to link up many kinds of transport—the truck, the mule, the coolie, the river steamer, the sampan—has a slow motion effect on operation in their approach stages. But there is nothing slow-motion about the fighting which has been taking place near Rathedaung, and on the Mayu Peninsula. The Jap is still the same stern opponent in defence as he has been in attack. He has found himself strong positions, is quite willing to stay there to the death, and most often has to be literally blown out of them.

On the other hand, the very toughness and skill of the enemy in this "pockets of resistance" type of fighting area is valuable in educating our own troops, British and Indian, in a most practical way for the greater battles ahead.

Every day their pressure increases. Every day they weaken the Japanese hold on this out of the way stretch of tropical earth and water. Every day this harshly colourful episode draws nearer to the inevitable extinction of the invader.

NEW WAY OF SELECTING INDIAN ARMY OFFICERS.

Three days in the country, in comfortable surroundings, with cheerful companions, and everything found—this is the new, pleasant way in which it is hoped to test future candidates for commissions in India's Fighting Forces.

In place of the old formal way of appearing before a Selection Board, and merely answering questions, a new Experimental Selection method based on highly successful usage in British and Allied Forces aims at making candidates feel at home, and providing them with an opportunity of displaying those traits of character so necessary in a leader of men.

Candidates will receive an invitation to spend three days as guests of the Experimental Selection Board in accommodation reserved for this purpose at the Indian Military Academy. On arrival at Dehra Dun they will be received by members of the Board—both civilian and military—who will do everything in their power to make candidates feel natural and at ease.

The assessment of a candidate's suitability will be divorced from any prejudice, whether conscious or unconscious, and in order to ensure complete impartiality, candidates will not divulge any information such as name, family, caste, religion, social or financial status. To the members of the Board their only identity will be a number.

The authorities will not be influenced by smart clothing, and it is recommended that candidates wear good working clothes during their stay at Dehra Dun.

POTENTIAL MILITARY QUALITIES.

Candidates will be entertained in parties of about 40, and the tests which they will be asked to carry out are the result of research, and are calculated to reveal a candidate's potential military qualities. They are simple, easy to understand, and for the most part, have no relation to education, despite the fact that the majority of them will be performed with paper and pencil. It is believed that all the tests, of whatever nature, will be found interesting, and in many cases amusing.

INITIATIVE, DASH AND RESOURCE.

Strenuous demands will not be made upon candidates, but they will be asked to play one short game. It may sound strange, but during this test members of the Board will not be testing a candidate's skill at games. What they will be seeking will be characteristics of initiative, dash and resource.

During their stay, candidates will live in an atmosphere of complete informality with members of the Board, who will dine with them in mess, and mix with them in off-duty periods, endeavouring at all times to put candidates at their ease.

The mess itself will be run on semi-military lines, with very few rules, and irksome restrictions cut to a minimum. European dishes will be served, but nothing will be included in the menu which can interfere with religion or caste.

In addition to civilian members, the Board will consist of Naval, Army and R. A. F. Officers, and every effort will be made to assist candidates in selecting the branch of the Service for which they are best suited.

PUDUKKOTTAI STATE NATIONAL WAR FRONT BUREAU.

PROGRAMME.

LECTURE CXLIII. (*Batch 2.*)

24- 4-43	Municipal Office	.	6.00 p.m.
25- 4-43	Kudumiyamalai	..	7.00 „
„	Parambur	...	7.30 „
26- 4-43	Vengalur	...	7.00 „
„	Konapattu	...	7.30 „
27- 4-43	Nachchandupatti	.	7.00 „
„	Virachchilai	...	7.30 „
28- 4-43	Kodumbalur	...	7.00 p.m.
„	Viralimalai	...	7.30 „
29- 4-43	Kalamavur	...	7.00 „
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